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SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS JOINS CALL TO KEEP COMMUNITY DAY SCHOOLS OPEN FOR AT-RISK YOUTH

LOS ANGELES – Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas today called for the Los Angeles County's Office of Education (LACOE) to find solutions to prevent the scheduled closing of 20 Community Day Schools in the County, six of which are in the Second District.

The Supervisor specifically called on the LACOE Superintendent to work together with the Probation Department in an effort to keep the schools open.

"Many of those who will suffer are probationers, recently released from Juvenile detention, who are in desperate need of small settings and additional support to enable them to catch up and get on with their lives," Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said.

Several speakers, representing both students and teachers, passionately testified on how the schools are transforming lives.

Jessica Fuentes, a teen mother who recently graduated from a Community Day School, said she was successful because the school offered day care for her child.

"If you close it, what's going to happen to everybody; they won't be able to graduate because they won't have a babysitter."

Dr. Pam Wright, a teacher at Mission Independence Study in Pomona, California, told the Board that her campus has a 100 percent graduation rate and a 100 percent passage rate on the California High School Exit Exam.

“We’re able to provide one on one instruction and students very quickly realize that they are going to get the help they need to be successful.”

The Supervisor urged LACOE to work with the Los Angeles Unified School District and Probation to find additional funding and or develop partnerships to cover expenses to keep the schools open.

The Supervisor thanked the teachers who have worked so hard in serving the students, adding that “I will work hard to find alternatives to the proposed drastic action of locking the doors of these much-needed schools.”

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